

Liturgy

557
The TRUE

DIVINITY

O F

Father, Son and Spirit,

A S

Expressed in the PRAYERS,

A N D

COLLECTS of the LITURGY,

And in the

SCRIPTURES.

Printed in the YEAR 1748.

THE TRUE

DIVINITY

NO.

THE HOLY BIBLE,

2 A.



AND

COLLECTIONS OF THE LITURGY,

ANNUAL

SCRIPTURE

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1748.

T H E

True Divinity, &c.

AS Christianity is the Religion we profess, it is necessary we should have a right Apprehenfion both of it, and of the Person by whom this Divine Institution was delivered to us : That it came from God, the Father, or Creator of all Things ; received its Sanction from him ; and was delivered to us by the Man CHRIST JESUS, may be sufficiently proved. He, in the Scripture, is sometimes styled the *Son of God*, sometimes the *Son of Man* ; and of him the Apostle, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, says, *God who at sundry Times, and in divers Manners, spake in Times past to the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last Days spoken unto us by his Son ; whom he hath appointed Heir of all Things ; by whom also he made the Worlds.* From hence it is evident, that this Institution comes from the One God, the first Cause of all Things ; not from Three Distinct Divine Beings, Essences, or Substances. The Son has not, in this Place, Creation ascribed to him, as some, in Warmth of Dispute, have alledged, and from thence have drawn false Conclusions.

IT must be acknowledged that, in this Epistle, very exalted Expressions are made Use of concerning the Son ; but yet are such as imply a Supremacy in the One God, or Father, over him. It is said, *The Son being the Brightness of his Glory,* (that is, the Glory of the One God) *and the express Image of his Person,* (according to the English Translation, but in Greek is *Hypostasis*, which signifies Substance) *and upholding all Things by the Word of his Power;* *when he had purged our Sins, sat down on the Right Hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the Angels, as he hath, by Inheritance, obtained a more excellent Name than they.* *For unto which of the Angels said he at any Time, Thou art my Son, this Day I have begotten thee?* And again, *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son.*

IT is from hence very evident, that the Exaltation of the Son was very great ; that he had Pre-eminence to the Angels ; but as plainly was originated by the Expressions *made*, and *begotten*, and not to have had Existence from Eternity, by the Expression, *This Day I have begotten thee* ; for *this Day* denotes a fixed Point of Duration, to which there must have been some preceding Duration : His Nativity was about four thousand Years after the Creation of the World ; but it is evident, from many Places of Scripture, that Christ had an Existence before he took Flesh upon him, and came into the World. Amongst many other Proofs of this, it is sufficient to mention one, *viz. JOHN xvii. 5. Glorify thou me, O Father, with the Glory I had with thee before the World was.*

A LEARNED * Author expresses himself in this Manner. " I
 " always suppose this pre-existent Soul of Christ to be a proper
 " human Spirit, *that is*, such a Spirit as, by its own Nature, is
 " suited to act in vital Union with a human, natural Body ; and
 " that it does not at all hinder the human Soul of Christ from
 " having intellectual Capacities and Powers vastly superior to any
 " other human Soul, or to any Angel in Heaven."

* Dr. WATTS.

THIS Author says, there are Places in Scripture, which represent Christ as existent before his Incarnation, in a Nature inferior to Godhead. For Christ, *says he*, is represented as his Father's Messenger, Minister, or Angel, that was a distinct Being from his Father, sent by his Father to perform such Actions, and such Services for his People long before his Incarnation, some of which seem too low for the Dignity of pure Godhead. This Author likewise observes, that, among those Expressions of Scripture which discover the Pre-existence of Christ, there are several, from whence we may derive a certain Proof that he has Divine Nature in him, where he is called *God, the Almighty God, Jehovah, the Lord of Hosts, I am that I am.*

IT is thought by learned Divines, that he was the Angel in the Old Testament ; the Angel that appeared to *Abraham*, saying, *I am the Almighty God.* It is an uncontestable Truth, that he has Divine Nature in him ; and I believe that neither those who are characterised by the Denomination of **ARIANS**, or **SOCINIANS**, either antient or modern, ever denied the Divine Nature in him : Mr. *Whiston* was in a publick Congregation, in Time of Divine Service, charged with denying the Divinity of our Saviour ; to which he publickly answered, *I do not deny the Divinity of our Saviour.* Therefore, I believe the Divine Nature in him is universally acknowledged ; and it is more for the Honour of Christianity to have an Agreement in Sentiment, than to have a Contrariety of Opinion amongst Christians in Matters of greatest Consequence.

THERE is no Difficulty in admitting a Subordination of the Man Christ Jesus, even exalted above all other created Beings, to the One God, the Father and Creator of all Things : For he himself declared, saying, *My Father is greater than I.* This Subordination must necessarily be allowed.

ON the other Hand, as the Divine Nature in Christ ought to be acknowledg'd in the highest Sense of it, even in the utmost Extent that Words can convey to us ; as is manifest by what the Apostle says, *That in him dwelleth the Fulness of the Godhead :* So, it is necessary that we receive right Apprehensions of the Divine Nature in him ; because false Conceptions concerning it must lead us into false Worship ; and it cannot be admitted that Divine Revelation is so imperfect, as to conceal from us such Knowledge as is useful and necessary for promoting true Piety. This Knowledge we may there find in plain Words, that may be understood, so far as directly tends to this Purpose ; so far it is no Mystery in the darkest Sense of that Word ; but thus far it is plainly discovered to us. Christ himself has expressly declared what the Divine Nature in him is, when he says, *My Father is in me*, that the One God is in him ; the One God, who by him made all Things, was in him. And it is not in any Part of Scripture either expressed, or the most remotely intimated, that there is any other Divine Nature in him than the One God ; nor can any Consequence be drawn from any Thing that is revealed, that there is.

THEREFORE, we are demonstrably certain, that this is the true Divinity of our Saviour, and that the Worship which, in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, is said to be paid to the Son, (viz. *Let all the Angels of God worship him*) is to the Divine Nature in the Son, the One God dwelling in him.

THERE is not, in Scripture, any Intimation, that there is an Union betwixt the Great God and the Man Jesus Christ, which makes one complex Person, even such as shall authorize our paying Adoration to Human Nature ; tho' the Author of the Book, intitled, *The Glory of Christ as God-Man*, affirms that there is ; and yet he puts this Objection, " How can any Thing, that is " not pure God, be made any Part of Religious Worship ? Is " not this contrary to the first Commandment, and to the ge- " neral Law of Worship in the Old and New Testament, which " directs it to be prayed to God only ?" Which I think very strong

strong and unanswerable ; and his Endeavours to prove the Contrary are far from being perfect. His Reply is as followeth, viz.

“ I think the Human Nature of Christ is no otherwise capable of Religious Worship, according to the Statutes of Heaven, but “ being thus gloriously united to the Divine ; but when it is “ thus united, the whole complex Person may be made the Ob- “ ject of Religious Worship, if God see fit ; since the Person “ so worshipped, is really one with God, and has personal Com- “ munication with the Divine Nature.” In Reply to this : This Union to the One God, cannot change Human Nature, from a created, to a self-existent and uncreated Being ; nor can there be a Reconciliation of the contrary Ideas of being one with God, or being true God, and Communion with God ; the one implying Identity, the other Diversity : Therefore, it is not possible, in Nature of Things, to make Divine Supreme Worship applicable to, or consistent with Human Nature, which is originated, and has received its Being from God. Likewise, as this Author adds, *If God sees fit, if we consult Divine Revelation,* the Apostle says in one Place, *To God, only wise, be Glory, through Jesus Christ, far ever :* In another Place, *Unto him be Glory, by Jesus Christ.* And our Saviour directs, that, when we pray, we must say, *Our Father* ; which is a very clear Proof, that the One God is the only Object of Supreme Divine Worship. It is likewise very obvious, that, as it is already proved that the One God, or Father, is the Divine Nature in the Son ; if the Divine and Human Nature of the Son make One complex Person, there are only Two Persons, not a Trinity of Persons : Consequently this cannot be received, without dissenting from the Doctrine of the Church of England ; which, in the Collect for *Trinity Sunday*, acknowledges the Trinity, and pays Worship and Adoration to the Unity, or One God.

As this Account of the Divine Nature of the Son, is evident from the Scripture, being confirmed both by what the Apostle says, and from what our Saviour declares ; so it may be a Satisfaction to make a strict Examination, and find it is not contradictory,

but agreeable, both to the Doctrine and Worship in the Liturgy, if that is rightly understood.

UPON Examination, whether the Prayers and Collects are directed to the One God, it cannot be denied, or doubted, but they are : The Confession is evidently so, *viz.* *Almighty and most merciful Father, we have erred and strayed from thy Ways,—we have offended against thy Holy Laws,—but thou, O Lord, have Mercy upon us,—spare thou them that are penitent, according to thy Promises in Christ* * *Jesu, our Lord ; and grant, O merciful Father, for his Sake.* The Address is evidently (by these so many repeated Directions, to One) intended to the Almighty God, the Father, in Hopes of Remission of Sins, by the Merits and Intercession of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Likewise, the Thanksgiving is to the *Almighty God, Father of all Mercies* ; and herein we say, *we bless thee for our Creation,—but above all, for thine inestimable Love, in the Redemption of the World, by our Lord Jesus Christ.* The same Direction and Conclusion, *through Jesus Christ*, is found in most, if not in all, the Prayers and Collects.

PERHAPS it may not, with so great Clearness, be explained, how Worship is directed in the four first Petitions of the Litany, as is here done, concerning the Prayers and Collects : For, without Caution and Attention, they might be so far misunderstood, as to be admitted as distinct Addresses to Three Divine Spiritual Substances ; and, it is to be feared, that very many, in repeating them, entertain such false Conceptions. But that it is not the Sense and Meaning of our Liturgy, may be collected from the *Athanasian Creed*, which says, *We worship the One God, not confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance* ; which forbids the Belief of Three Divine Substances. Likewise from the Communion Ser-

* Why shou'd we not say *Jesus*, rather than *Jesu*? The latter is not agreeable to *English*, though it may be to *Latin*, and to Prayers used by the Church of *Rome*. But in our Liturgy, in the Prayer for Rain, and the Collect for the second Sunday in *Advent*, the Conclusion is in *Jesu* : And our Language makes Name the same in all the Cases.

vice ; in which it is said, *There are Three Persons in One Substance.* In Order to our forming some Apprehensions of Three Persons in One Substance, we may consider the First of the Thirty-nine Articles, which declares they are not Parts of that One Substance. What Apprehensions must we then have of them ? Mr. Norris, in his *Moral Essays on Love*, says, *The Faculties of the Soul of Man is a lively Image of the Trinity.* If this Comparison is allowable, we cannot properly say they are Modes of Existence, but distinct Powers of the One God ; and they are not, on that Supposition, distinct Objects of Worship, but different Motives and Considerations for paying Divine Worship and Adoration to the One God, with different and distinct Acknowledgments of his Goodness to Mankind. Thus, in Metaphysical Speculation, we may consider Three, viz. Paternity, Filiation, and Sanctification, subsisting in One Substance, and may apply to these, *Trinity in Unity*.

THAT these are Three distinct Volitions, or as some learned Men have expressed themselves, Three Differences, not Divisions, may be reasonably allow'd ; but are not Three distinct divine intelligent Agents, or Persons, in the same Sense as we make Use of that Word in Discourse, about common Affairs of this Life.

COMPARE with this what Dr. Waterland, and others, have said, viz. " God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." Likewise what is said more clearly by Dr. Burnet, Rector of West-Kington in Wiltshire ; " That the Logos was God, only in Respect of the Deity that dwelt in Him, was united to Him, and acted in Him, and by Him. Considered as united to the Godhead of the Father, he may properly be called God, by his Father's Godhead ; which is called in the *Nicene Creed*, God of God. If the same Notion be applied to the Holy Spirit, and if he may be consider'd as having two Natures, that is, a Created, united to the Divine Nature ; and that God dwelt in him, and acted in and by him, as he did in and by Jesus Christ ; I think it will give us an easy Apprehension of the Trinity, which

" has long puzzled Mankind ; and rid us of a great many Difficulties which attend that Doctrine, as it is usually explained by Divines ; and that, without giving up any Thing which the Scriptures have revealed concerning it."

THIS is agreeable both to the Language and true Sense of the Scriptures ; in which we find, that there are Three different Manifestations which denoted Father, Son, and Spirit : This is declared in the third Chapter of St. Matthew, in these Words : *And lo, the Heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him. And lo, a Voice from Heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* The Voice was a Declaration from the Father : The Man Christ Jesus was, by the Voice, declared to be the Son : And the Visible Descent denoted Spirit. The Voice was an Object of the Sense of Hearing : The Man was seen and convers'd with : As was likewise the Descent seen. These Three, therefore, were material Objects, manifested in a sensible Manner, denoting Father, Son, and Spirit. As it is expressed by the Apostle, *That God was manifest in the Flesh* ; so, in Confirmation of this it appears, undeniable, by what our Saviour declares, viz. *My Father is in me.* The Manifestation of the One God in the Voice, and likewise in the Descent, is very evident. This may be an Explanation of *Unity in Trinity ; One God in Three material Objects.*

To draw Conclusions from hence, it will appear, that in these Accounts of the Trinity, and, I think, in all others that I ever saw or heard of, there is thus far an Agreement of Sentiment, That there is only One Divine Being, Essence, or Substance, that is the Object of Divine Supreme Worship ; except by the foremention'd Author ; who affirms, That there is an Union of the Human and Divine Nature, which makes One complex Person ; and that being thus gloriously united, the whole complex Person may be made the Object of Religious Worship.

To

To compare the different Ways of representing the Doctrine of the Trinity : If the One God is Father, Son, and Spirit, as some learned Men explain it ; or, if in One God, or Substance, there are Three which are termed Persons ; or, if One God dwelleth, or is manifested in Three material Objects, as is plainly deducible from Scripture ; or, as in the *Athanasian Creed*, we worship One God, not confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance : Each of these imply, that there is but One Divine Substance, that is the Object of Divine Supreme Worship ; and who is there that, upon mature Thought, can possibly have different Sentiments ? Certainly, that Way of explaining the Trinity must be most approved, which is most agreeable, both to the Language, and true Sense of the Scripture : And it may well deserve serious Consideration, whether it is not contrary to the Scripture, and to all the foregoing Explanations, to say, *To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.*

SINCE it is undeniably true, that Divine Supreme Worship is only to be payed to the One God ; it may be asked, Is nothing due to the Son Jesu Christ, our Saviour ? To which it may be replied, That there is due to Him Love, and a grateful Remembrance ; for he hath left a Divine Institution, a Religious Rite, a Commemoration of Himself ; to the End we should remember his exceeding great Love, in dying for us ; and the innumerable Benefits which, by his precious Blood shedding, he hath obtained to us : And that he is likewise a Mediator between God and Man, having suffered Death upon the Cross, for the Redemption of Mankind ; and made by his Oblation of Himself, * once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction, for the Sins of the whole World ; which thankful Remembrance leads to, and terminates, in Adoration of the One God ; to whom we give Thanks, *for his ineffi-*

* This is directly opposite to Mr. Johnson's representing this Commemoration to be a Sacrifice, which he terms an *unbloody Sacrifice.*

enable Love, in the Redemption of the World by our Lord Jesus Christ: And this doth not exclude, but reasonably promote, the most grateful Sense of the Love of Christ towards us. Dr. Burnet, in his Treatise on the *Doctrine of Redemption*, says, " The Scheme of our Redemption, by Christ, was the Work and Contrivance of God the Father, without any other Motive to it, but his own inherent Goodness : And the Efficacy of what our Saviour hath done towards it, is owing only to his cheerful Compliance with the Will of God the Father appointing it, as the Condition of our Reconciliation with him. I would not be thought, by any one, to say this in Derogation of the Honour of our Saviour, in this Work : God forbid that I, or any one, should admit Thoughts that tend to lessen what he hath done for us. I magnify, and adore his Goodness ; and never can be sufficiently grateful for his Love, that he has condescended to be the Instrument of so much Good to me, and all the World. But I do not think it any Diminution to his Honour, not to ascribe to Him what the Scripture doth not ascribe to Him, and what he doth not assume to Himself. He declares himself only the Executor of his Father's Will.—*John v. 30; vi. 38.*"

To sum up what is here proposed, as a rational Account of what we may give our Assent to, concerning Father, Son, and Spirit ; and the Object to which we are to pay Divine Adoration and Supreme Worship, compared with other Representations thereof : It is proposed, as justifiable to say, Our Saviour had in him two Natures, *viz.* Human and Divine ; that in him dwelleth the Father, the One God : That the Cohabitation of God, in him, the Man Jesus Christ, is the true Divinity : That the Voice from Heaven, denoting Father, was a material or sensible Object ; as was likewise the Descent as a Dove ; and that the One God, dwelling in these Three, was the Divine Nature in each of them : Which Divine Nature, the One God, only is to be worshipped ; and not the sensible Objects in which he dwelleth, with Supreme Divine Adoration.

AND

AND now it may be left to the most learned and pious Divines to determine, whether this is not agreeable both to the Language and true Meaning of the Scriptures; likewise perfectly consistent with the Scheme of our Redemption, which is (as Dr. Burnet expresses himself) the Work and Contrivance of God the Father.

THE Terms, *Trinity in Unity*, and *Unity in Trinity*, are, in this Dissertation, made Use of only in a speculative Way, in Order to shew a consistent Meaning in them; which, though it may not be found in Scripture, nor, therein, any Thing of that Nature intimated; yet, I believe, there is nothing therein contradictory to it: But I cannot undertake to discover any Use to be made of them for promoting Piety and Devotion; which may be more effectually advanced, without ever taking such remote Enquiries into Consideration.

* RELIGION of Nature and Revelation discover to us more sublime and beneficial Truths; the former, by a necessary Train of Effects and Causes, leads us to a Demonstration, that there is One first Cause of all Things: That He is necessarily self-existent: That there cannot possibly be more than One necessary self-existent Being; which, in the strictest Propriety of Words, is called God: And that He only is to be worshipped and adored, served and obeyed, as Supreme Governor of the Universe. The latter, viz. Revelation, declares, *That God created the Heaven and the Earth*; and said, *Let us make Man in our Image after our Likeness*: So God created Man in his own Image; which, Commentators say, signifies only an approach to the Divine Like-

* This Paragraph may be proposed as the Contents, or Plan, of a more large and useful Treatise; a Subject so sublime, as to equal the Dignity and Copiousness of an Epic Poem, which would not stand in Need of the useful Ornaments of Machinery. And it is earnestly wished, that some Person of Learning, and elevated Genius, would undertake a compleat and finished Work on that Subject.

ness, in Understanding, Freedom of Choice, Spirituality, Immortality, &c. which was a happy *State of Innocence*, and great Perfection. We may reasonably suppose our first Parents much employed in contemplating on the great Works of Creation, when they had in View the Solar System ; and much more on the Glorious Being the *Great Creator* ; of whose Presence, and their Dependence on Him, they were sensible ; which filled their Minds with continual Dispositions to Piety and Religious Worship, and Obedience, attended with the greatest and most lively Pleasure and Satisfaction that human Nature is capable of. This happy State continued 'till, by artful Delusions of Satan, they were led into an Act of Disobedience ; by which Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin ; and so Death passed on all Men, for that all have sinned. By this Fall likewise, human Nature has been impaired, the rational Faculties weakened, and, instead of that Serenity of Mind, a Croud of irregular tormenting Passions have succeeded ; instead of constant, lively, Dispositions to Piety, and Devout Adoration, together with an uninterrupted Pursuit of our Supreme Good, a continual Round of trifling, if not sinful, Amusements ; a very sad Contrast to the foregoing happy State. But, to raise Mankind from this deplorable Condition, a Saviour was promised, and, in due Time, came into the World. He, by His Example and Precepts, taught us how to live virtuously and religiously ; by which Rectitude, of Conduct, we might better support the Dignity of human Nature, and, by correcting Depravity, incident to us by the Fall, we might approach nearer to the Perfection in which Man was created ; a commendable View, which deserves constant Attention, and vigorous Endeavours. He suffer'd Death on the Cross, and made an Attonement for our Sins : After his Resurrection from the Dead, he ascended up into Heaven ; there makes continual Intercession for us, and is our only Mediator.

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THE foregoing Paragraph contains such comprehensive Truths, that the most zealous Assertors of the Doctrine of the Trinity must acknowledge, that those who sincerely believe them cannot be supposed to deny any necessary *Articles of the Christian Faith.*

F I N I S.



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John T. Coddington, Esq., of Boston, Massachusetts, has
kindly furnished me with a copy of the Address of the
Massachusetts Society of the Sons of the American Revolution,
JA 64 at their annual meeting, held at Boston, on the 1st of October, 1864.

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